

SCAM ALERT



Office of the Inspector General
SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Don't Hand Off Your Assets for "Safe Keeping"

Real SSA OIG agents will never request cash, gift cards, or gold bars

The Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) continues to receive alarming reports of criminals impersonating SSA OIG agents and other federal law enforcement officials and requesting that their targets meet them in person to hand off cash, gold, or other forms of non-traceable currency.

In some situations, scammers are providing copies of fraudulent government identification badges, which look genuine and may have names of actual government employees. Federal law enforcement officers will **NEVER** text or email photographs of credentials or badges to prove their identity, and neither will federal employees.

"This is an extremely dangerous situation. We are warning the public about scammers instructing victims to liquidate their assets into cash or buy gold to protect their funds," said Michelle L. Anderson, Assistant Inspector General for Audit, performing the duties of the Inspector General for the Social Security Administration. "In a recent situation, one elderly person handed over

\$2 million in gold bars to a criminal claiming to be a CIA agent. We ask that you remain on alert to these harmful and vicious scammers to protect yourself and your assets. While our agents are out in the field, they will not ask you for money or any kind of currency or offer to safeguard your assets in a protected account. Do not respond to these kinds of requests."



Members of the press may make inquiries to Social Security OIG at oig.press@ssa.gov

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This is a SCAM! NEVER agree to meet with individuals to deliver cash, gold bars, or precious metals. The United States government will never request you send money via gift cards, wire transfer, or cryptocurrency, nor will it request you purchase gold bars or other precious metals. This scam tactic puts potential victims in physical danger.

Handing cash or any kind of currency directly to a phony agent is a dangerous twist on a known scam tactic that pressures individuals to pay in a specific way by using cash, gift cards, or other currency that is hard to track. SSA OIG and other federal government agencies do NOT conduct business in this manner.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE BEEN SCAMMED

Stop talking to the scammer. Notify financial institutions and safeguard accounts. Call the police and file a police report. File a complaint with the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (ic3.gov). Report Social Security-related scams to SSA OIG (oig.ssa.gov). Report other scams to the Federal Trade Commission (ftc.gov).

Keep financial transaction information and the record of all communications with the scammer.



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